(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor and by when it would be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Connecting Buddhist Pilgrimages

4096. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to launch a unique express train connecting all the important places of Buddhist pilgrimages in country besides one in Nepal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are details of such centres in Orissa State which would be covered in the train journey?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) To facilitate the Buddhist tourists, a tourist train has recently been launched in collaboration with the Indian Railway Tourism and Catering Corporation (IRCTC). Presently this train is running on the following itinerary.

Delhi Safdarjung-Gaya-Bodhgaya (Nalanda and Rajgir by road)-Varanasi (Sarnath by road)-Gorakhpur (Kushinagar and Lumbini by road)-Gonda (Shravasti by road)-Agra-Delhi Safdarjung.

However, this itinerary does not cover any Buddhist pilgrimage centre situated in Orissa.

New PRS at Ambli Road station

†4097. SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT:
SHRI SURYAKANTBHAI ACHARYA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether there is a plan to make new PRS at Ambali Road station situated at Ahmedabad-Viramgam rail line;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Computerised reservation facilities are capital intensive and also involve significant recurring costs. These are provided at railway stations registering a large number of reservation related transactions. The reservation workload at Ambali Road railway station is not high enough to warrant this level of investment at present.

Railway projects in NER

4098. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of rail projects taken up by Government in the States of North Eastern Region particularly in Assam during the current year;

(b) the details and present status of such projects, project-wise; and

(c) the time by when such projects are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) New Guwahati-Digaru patch doubling (29.81 kms) has been included in budget, 2007-08 at a cost of Rs. 96.32 crore. The work would be taken up once Budget is passed.

(c) No target for completion of the project has been fixed.

Catering contracts

4099. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many new catering contracts were given during last three years, all over the country;

(b) what method of selection was adopted; and